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FOR THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

**SERMON NO. XLIII.**

**ON THE DUTY OF PUBLIC BAPTISM.**

1 Samuel, i. 28.

"Therefore, also, have I lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord."

In the chapter of the text, we behold the pious Hannah engaged in the ceremony of dedicating her son to the Divine service. It was in compliance with a solemn vow, enforced by gratitude to God for giving her a son; by maternal love, for how could she have better provided for her child than to dedicate him to his Lord; and by charity to her fellow men, whose welfare he was destined essentially to promote, that she performed the act to which your attention is invited.

The priest received the child at the hands of his parents, as an offering acceptable to God. The parents accompanied the presentation of their son with a statement of the motives which prompted to this pious act. "Therefore, also," said the mother, who acted as speaker on this occasion, "I have lent him, or restored\* him, (as the Targum renders it) to the Lord." To this succeeded a solemn vow: "As long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord;" as if I devote him to be "Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end." The assembly of worshippers united with the priest and the parents, in religious rites, in prayer doubtless, that God would accept this pious offering; own this child as his by adoption, and make him a blessing to his worthy parents, to the Church of God, and to his country; that he would cause his favour to shine on him during his earthly pilgrimage, and at the end of it, open to him the gate of his everlasting kingdom.

How interesting the whole scene! The presentation of the first born, at the expiration of forty days from its birth, was a common ceremony among the Israelites. Samuel had doubtless been presented and redeemed (Numb. viii. 18.) agreeably to that custom, but this second presentation was one without redemption. It was a de-

\* In the margin the word is rendered "returned."

dication of him to God's service through life. It was a religious office which had been rarely if ever performed in Judea. The charm of novelty attracted the curious, piety summoned her sons, and sympathy impelled many to witness this ceremony. It took place in the temple of God, before a feeling and, probably, a crowded assembly. These parents saw, as it were, the eyes of the whole city fixed upon them, and felt that they were standing in the presence of God; that it was to him they were addressing a most solemn vow. Assembled under a sense of the Divine presence, and the consciousness of their own frailty and sinfulness, they were notwithstanding full of faith in the goodness of their God; "nothing doubting but that he favourably alloweth this charitable work," sensible of the obligation which imposed it, and of the benefits to their beloved son, which might reasonably be anticipated from it, their bosoms glowed with piety and parental love, their countenances were illumined with joy, and the tone with which they prayed, avowed their pious gratitude, and made a full surrender of their child to the Divine service, proved that that which was their duty, was also their pleasure. The aged Eli, and the assembly of the pious, must have sympathized in these grateful emotions. The little cherub himself, if he could have been sensible to the burst of feeling on this occasion, must have been animated by the sensibility with which Eli hailed him as a child of God, and by the delight which beamed from his mother's eye. Is it presumptuous to add, that the Father of Spirits must have looked with complacency on this spectacle, so congenial to his benevolence?

It is not the least excellency of that Church to which it is our happiness to belong, that she permits, invites, yea makes it our duty to be parties at a ceremony extremely similar to, and scarcely less interesting than that which we have been contemplating. I allude to the public dedication of children to God in baptism. You cannot but perceive the resemblance between this duty, as regularly performed, and that of which Samuel was the subject. The ceremonies are alike in the principles on which they are founded, and in the manner of conducting them. Christian parents, like pious Hannah, feel that the vows of the Lord are upon them; that they and their household are under a solemn obligation to serve God, and that their religion binds them to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. They remember that every good gift comes from above, and the vivid joys of the parent never fail to kindle anew in their bosoms the flame of pious gratitude.—They are sensible that to bring a child into the fold of Christ is to do for it a most valuable service; that this solemn ceremony will have a tendency to strengthen their own pious affections, and those of such fellow Christians as may be spectators of it, and that they are promoting the interests of their Redeemer's kingdom, not only by giving it another subject, but by impressively recommending those who are without, to unite themselves to it.

As their views are similar to those of the parents in the text, so their mode of performing this rite in our Church, is extremely simi-



lar. The Church requires the infant to be dedicated to God, as Samuel was, in *public*, in the house of God. The parties, in both cases, are the officiating minister or priest, the child, his parents or sponsors, and the congregation, or (to use the terms of our rubric) "the flock of true Christian people." In the four exhortations contained in our Baptismal service, the advantages of baptism are concisely set forth, and the sponsors solemnly promise or vow, in the name of the child presented by them, that by God's help, he "will obediently keep God's will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of his life." Who does not perceive the analogy between these parts of our service, and the reasons stated at Samuel's dedication for that act, and the vow then made: "As long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord." In our baptismal office, the congregation are invited to unite in prayer to God, in behalf of the infant seeking his grace. Like the Jewish worshippers, at the presentation of Samuel, they offer up sacrifices to God, not indeed the blood of a bullock, but the sacrifices of prayer and thanksgiving, of a broken and contrite spirit, which in the sight of God are of great price.

There are very many parents in our widely extended Church, who promptly and cheerfully come into the holy temple, and at its font devote their children to the Divine service; but there are others who decline doing so. It cannot offend, and may be useful to such persons to have stated to them, some reasons in favour of this reasonable service.

The nature of baptism; the example of our forefathers in the Jewish and Christian Churches; the advantages peculiar to *public* baptism, and the authority of our Church, are considerations which will abundantly satisfy every impartial mind of the propriety of having baptisms performed in the house of God. Let us attend to these in order. 1st. The nature of baptism shows, I do not say the necessity, but the propriety of its being administered in the house of God. It is one of the most solemn religious acts; one of the only two positive institutions which Christ has appointed for the observance of his people; it is a sacrament, or sign of God's communion with man, and an oath, as the etymology of the word sacrament imports, taken by the baptized, to be the Lord's, to serve him faithfully during life.

Who does not shudder at the idea of joining in such an act, with a cold heart, and with unhallowed lips? Is the dread of profaning the Lord's table reasonable, and do the best of us approach it with fear and trembling? Should not a similar apprehension be excited when about to participate in his other sacrament, lest we perform "the same unworthily?" Should we not in the one case, as well as in the other, resort to such means as appear best calculated to animate our piety, to enable us to render to God an acceptable service? The one sacrament is, except on extraordinary occasions, administered in the Church, in that holy place, where a temper suited to its participation, may be expected to be produced. Should not the other sacrament be given and received there also? Is the Deity es-

pecially present at a baptism? Let him be called upon to enter a place, not indeed worthy of his majesty, but the most so of any of the works of men's hands, into that temple which has been consecrated to his service.

Is the baptized person the subject of a vow or solemn oath? Let it be administered under circumstances calculated to make it impressive. Let its natural solemnity be augmented by the sanctity of the scene around him; an assembly publicly convened in the immediate presence of the Most High, in his holy temple, uniting in adoration, prayer and thanksgiving, with one posture, one voice, and one heart.

Baptism is, with propriety called an initiating ordinance. By it man is received into the congregation of Christ's flock, into the ark of his Church, or incorporated into, or grafted into the *body* of his Church, as it is otherwise expressed. To join a society so conspicuous in the world, to cultivate a Christian temper, and to practise Christian duties, are actions in their very nature *public*. The Christian is enjoined to let his light shine before men, and solemnly warned that if he be ashamed of his Saviour and his Gospel, that Saviour will be ashamed of him when he cometh in the glory of his Father. But independent of the obligation to confess Christ before men, who does not perceive that a *secret* Christian implies a contradiction? If then the ends of baptism are public, so should the ordinance itself be. To enter on the Christian life, which is a public one, secretly of choice, is no auspicious omen. Baptism is the instrument of admission into a certain society. Where does the common sense of mankind dictate that the initiation should take place? The practice of other associations supplies the answer. In the presence of the society duly convened, in the place appropriated to their meetings; in the case before us then, in the Church where Christians are assembled, and where the great head of the Church, who condescends to be a party to this religious contract, is especially present.

In the second place: Let us inquire what was the practice of our fathers in the Church, with respect to baptism, or rather of the primitive Christian Church, in relation to this rite, and of the Jewish Church, in relation to similar institutions. In this last mentioned Church, there existed several rites extremely similar to Christian baptism. The Jewish historians explicitly declare that the initiatory rite of their religion, was always performed in the synagogue, and this may be inferred from the account we have of the infancy of the Baptist: "On the eighth day they *came* to circumcise the child." It is the opinion of some antiquaries, that proselytes to Judaism, in addition to the rite above mentioned, were baptized. The Scriptures afford us no light as to this point, but the presumption is, that as circumcision was publicly performed, so was its attendant ceremony, proselyte baptism.

The consecration of Aaron and his sons, by washing, (Ex. xxix. 4.) bears some analogy to the Christian institution of baptism, and this, let it be remembered, took place "at the door of the tabernacle of the



congregation." The dedication mentioned in the text, was done in the *temple*, and the presentations of all the first born of the children of Israel, were invariably made in that sacred place. In compliance with this custom, at the expiration of forty days after the birth of our Saviour, his parents brought him to Jerusalem, and in the *temple* there presented him, "according to the law of the Lord." (Luke ii. 22. 39.)

Let us now turn our attention to the practice of the Christian Church, in its earliest and purest ages. In the days of the founder of our religion, no particular buildings were appropriated to Divine worship. He and his disciples were a persecuted people, not accommodated with a separate building, and therefore subjected to the inconvenience of performing the social duties of religion in private houses, often in the open air. At that period they had literally a church in the house, and a church in the field. It was in such a church, before an assembly of Christians, convened for divine worship, that baptisms generally were performed. I do not say universally, the Ethiopian courtier, and the jailor, perhaps we may add St. Paul, were privately baptized. These instances justify private baptism, but they do not recommend it. Our Lord, the acknowledged exemplar of the Christian, was publicly baptized. "Now when *all the people* were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus *also* being baptized and praying, the heavens, &c." (Luke iii. 21.) We have, in the sacred volume, many accounts of baptisms, but are seldom informed where they were administered. It is certain, however, that St. John's baptisms were ordinarily public. (Mark i. 5.) It is presumable that Cornelius and his friends assembled together for religious instruction, as also certain companions of St. Peter, were baptized *immediately after* a sermon which he had addressed to them. (Acts x. 23 24. 48.) After another sermon in which this Apostle had alluded to the propriety of infants being received into the Christian family, we are informed that three thousand souls, including, doubtless, many children, were baptized in public, before this religious assembly of course; for the ceremony was performed *then*, at the conclusion of St. Peter's discourse, on the spot where it was delivered.

The Apostolic usage prevailed in the Church, with little deviation, during its purity. Baptisms were administered in the neighbourhood of springs or fountains, or rivers, sometimes at fountains built in the Church porch, or in the Church itself, or at a little distance from it; sometimes indeed *out* of the house of God, but never (except on emergencies) out of the presence of the congregation.\* An early council (the Trullian) enacted that this sacrament should not be administered in Chapels, that were appropriate or private, but only in the public, or parish Churches. It was no doubt, with the view of making this ceremony public, among other good reasons, that stated periods for performing it were appointed by the primitive Church. The custom of baptizing only at Easter and

\* Wheatly.

Whitsuntide, except in cases of necessity, is generally known to have prevailed in the first centuries.

I trust my brethren, the facts which have been detailed, will satisfy your minds that I have not been recommending to you a novel practice, that to acquiesce in the public baptism of your children, is to be in the good old way in which are seen the footsteps of our blessed Lord, Jewish Saints, and Christian Apostles and Fathers.

I would recommend public baptism by the consideration in the third place, of its peculiar advantages. The person baptized in private, is as truly made a Christian as he who is publicly baptized. The privileges, comforts, and future reward of the Christian, are covenanted to both. But the impression made on the mind of the Divine goodness, of the obligation to comply with the terms on which God has been pleased to suspend salvation, and of the value of the covenant under which mankind are placed, by our Saviour, is more forcible when this rite, typical of that covenant, is performed under the solemn circumstances of standing in the house, at the altar of God, and before an assembly of his people.—It is true, an infant may be insensible to these circumstances, but when he comes to the age of intelligence, with what energy may the exhortation to adhere to his baptismal vow, be enforced, by the consideration, that he had been brought to the house of God; there solemnly devoted to the Divine service; there, in the presence of God, and angels and men, pledged himself, by his sponsors, to lead a godly and a Christian life. These considerations are also adapted to excite in the minds of parents and sponsors, a proper sense of their relative duties. They are forcibly reminded of the importance of religious education. They see the Church attentive to this object, taking children under its protection in infancy, and lest parents should be removed from them by death, or by other casualties, or should neglect their duty, assigning to them other instructors, pointing out to these their duties, exacting of them a solemn *vow* to perform them, and eloquently charging them to execute it. They must participate in the seriousness which the house of God, the presence of his people in it, and the devotion of the officiating minister, and of the pious worshippers, are adapted to inspire.

The sentiments so naturally awakened or quickened in parents or sponsors, not only tend to the improvement of their own hearts, to their advancement in piety and virtue, objects which no religious society can undervalue, but they operate directly to the benefit of the baptized infant, whose religious improvement depends much on the strength of the impression which his spiritual guides have of their obligations. The person publicly baptized, has, moreover, the benefit of the united prayers of Christian worshippers, and these in turn are reminded of their baptismal engagements, and of the nature of the religion they profess, for it is well observed in our excellent office, that “baptism doth represent unto us our profession,” a profession which buries us with Christ in baptism, and requires us to rise again as he did, to rise from the death of sin, unto the life of righteousness.



It is an objection of great weight to the private administration of baptism, that thereby many Christians and occasional attendants at the house of God, are excluded from the spiritual good which the witnessing of that ceremony is known frequently to produce. Many a free thinker and libertine, have been deeply affected by the interesting spectacle of an assembly engaged in prayer, or in participating of the Lord's Supper. Might not such persons be similarly moved by the religious office we are considering?

The fathers of our Church were deeply read in the Scriptures, and in ecclesiastical history, they therefore were thoroughly acquainted with the nature of baptism, and with the practice of the primitive Church in the administration of that ordinance. Under the influence of this knowledge, and of the experience of the peculiar advantages of public baptism, they have expressly enjoined it on their devout sons.

I have then to observe, in the third and last place, that our Church positively directs that the children of her members should be publicly baptized. It is true that she has given us a private form of baptism, but it is enjoined on her Clergy to "warn their people that they do not, without great cause and necessity, procure their children to be baptized at home," and it is declared to be expedient that the child privately baptised, should be subsequently "brought into the Church, to the intent that the congregation may be certified of his baptism," and an office extracted from the public form of baptism, is appointed in that case to be used. Our Church has pursued a consistent conduct with respect to both sacraments. She holds that both are public and sacred ordinances, and therefore should generally be administered in public, and in the house of God. But in cases where this cannot be done, she has provided a private form, for the administration of both. It might, with as much propriety, be asserted that she contemplated having the Lord's Supper celebrated *always*, or most frequently, in private, as that she contemplated having the sacrament of baptism so administered.

But it cannot be necessary to argue on this subject. We have a baptismal office, which is entitled the "*public Baptism of infants, to be used in the Church.*" It regards the *congregation* as parties to a baptism, and they are expressly addressed in three exhortations contained in the office. In the consecration prayer, God is invoked to "regard the supplications of his congregation;" the minister says to the sponsors, "Ye have brought this child *here* to be baptized," and says that he receives the child into "the congregation of Christ's flock." The rubrics direct the Clergy not to baptize privately, except "when need shall compel them so to do," and instruct them to have baptisms administered on Sundays, or other holy days, or prayer days, and immediately after the second lesson, either at "Morning or Evening Prayer." The design of these rubrics plainly is, that baptisms should be public, not in name merely, but in fact, so that the congregation in general, should be present at them.

The necessity of some government in the Church, is generally admitted; the excellency of the polity of our Church is felt, and acknowledged by most of us; the wisdom and piety of the framers of our religious offices are unquestionable; the benefits of adhering to their regulations, which will stand the test of Scripture and reason, are no longer problematical; the evils of deviating from them might be anticipated, and have been experienced. Shall we comply with them or reject them? Shall we condemn the authority of our excellent Church, or what is little better, regard that authority partially, only so far as suits our prejudices, or our convenience?

You are a Christian; the solemn nature of baptism whispers, beware lest you profane it. You are a parent, and will not deny your son or daughter the advantages consequent on the public administration of an impressive ceremony. Sponsors! You desire to discharge your duty, and to be useful to your ward. Seek the blessing of God; seek the impulse to be derived from the holy temple, echoing with his praises.

Child of a Church, whose glory it is to be "built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone," do not weaken her influence by violating her laws. Do not, by disobedience to her injunctions, prove yourself an unworthy member. Have you the feelings of a man? Deny not to that brother for whom Christ died, any one mean of religious improvement. Be persuaded, one and all, to promote by your advice, authority and example, the public dedication of children to God—the baptizing of them in his Church, before his people.—Piety, parental love, philanthropy, and the Church of your vows, claim this reasonable service.

*Note.*—Hooker, in his "Ecclesiastical Polity," defending the order of his Church, relative to Baptism, takes great pains to prove that Baptism, in private houses, is admissible in extreme cases. The Sectaries against whom he argued, thought public baptism (i. e. in Church) alone justifiable, and Hooker not anticipating any objections against this mode, has not in his complete treatise, a single argument in favour of it, as if he considered the point so clear, that it needed no argument, and that it would not be controverted.

## WORSHIP OF IMAGES.

### NO. 2.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Having shown that Protestants are not guilty of the perverse and groundless misrepresentation of the religion of Roman Catholics, with which they have been boldly charged, on the subject of their *worship of Angels and Saints, and the Virgin Mary*, let us consider whether the same accusation as to the *Roman Catholic worship of Images* should be made, in the face of such evidence as induces, on the part of Protestants, the persuasion, that Roman Catholics are chargeable with this lamentable error.



It has been called a misrepresentation of the religion of Roman Catholics, to say that "they worship the images, or pictures of the Virgin Mary, and other Saints; that they violate the second of God's commandments, (as relating to image and idol worship) without scruple; that sensible, notwithstanding, that their practice is contrary to the said second commandment they have, in several of their Catechisms, left out the second commandment, and split the tenth into two; that Roman Catholics in excusing themselves from idolatry in their image worship, say no more for their exculpation, than the heathens said for themselves, and that, therefore, Catholics are equally idolatrous as the heathens are, or were."\*

Here the impression which generally obtains, among Protestants on this subject, is stated rather more strongly than it needs be; and as if to give it the character of the utmost possible offence against charity, other language than their own is added to that, which they correctly enough, in general, are represented to have used. It may be true, that some Protestants, in an intemperate zeal of dissent from Popery, have considered Roman Catholics equally as *idolatrous as the heathens either are or were*. I believe, however, that a wide distinction is generally considered due in favour of Christian worshippers of the one only God, however incumbered their worship may be with erroneous appendages, from those, who, with no knowledge or belief of the one Jehovah, may worship infinitely various fictitious deities, in idols, in which they may be supposed to reside. The author of an article in the fourth number of the "*Southern Review*," has with needless elaborateness of detail, given the *literary and political community*, for whom that work is intended, reasons to believe, that the idolatry of the aborigines of America, is a very different thing from the Roman Catholic reverence or adoration of images. Voltaire, it is true, thought the heathens were no more idolaters than Roman Catholics. I would not, however, take his authority as good, against the industrious author of the essay, in the *Review*. There is a difference, and we should admit that it is important. The *poor Indian*, either honoured his idols with a worship terminating in them, or, through them, worshipped the *unknown God*. Christians under the denomination of Roman Catholics, like other Christians, worship the one true God of the Scriptures. But their Church has authorised a use of images in their places of worship, that would make a certain kind of worship paid to them, consistent with the purer and exclusive homage which Jehovah demands for himself. The creed of Pius IVth, so called, "a succinct and explicit summary of the canons of the Council of Trent," which Mr. Butler says "is received throughout the Roman Catholic Church, and to which every Catholic who is admitted into the

\* I quote as before, although it was forgotten to say so, a work recently published, which, a few weeks since, fell accidentally in my way, and which thus states the "*misrepresentations*" which Protestants had published of the religion of the Roman Catholics. It is written with better temper than usually characterizes Roman Catholic controversial writings; and is as plausible as subtle.

Catholic Church, after publicly reading it, professes his assent," has the following clause: "I most firmly assert, that the images of Christ and of the Mother of God, ever Virgin, and also of the other Saints, are to be had and retained; and that due *honour* and *veneration*, are to be given to them." This was the result to which the long unsettled doctrine of the Church of Rome, or the Roman Catholic Church, if that appellation more acceptably signifies the body of Christian people meant, was brought, by the last *General Council so called*. The oppositions of councils on this point, and the conflicts of zealots, in which even Emperors and Empresses bore their part, were to be no more the disgrace of Christendom. It is reasonable to regret that the same authority which thus settled the disputes which had agitated the Church on the worship of images, had not put the reproach utterly away. It, on the other hand, determined, as we have seen, that images should be *had and retained*, and *due honour and veneration given to them*. The words of the decree of the Council of Trent, enacted at its 25th session, on which this article of the symbol of Pius IVth is founded, are—"Christi, Mariæ Virginis, et sanctorum imagines, in templis retinendas, eisque debitum honorem impetendum, non quod in iis insit divinitas, vel virtus, sed quoniam honos, qui eis exhibetur refertur ad prototypa: ita ut per imagines, Christum adoremus et sanctos, quorum similitudinem gerunt veneremur:"\* or, *that the images of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the Saints, should be kept in the Churches, and due honour be given to them; not as if there were in them either Divinity or power, but because the honour which is shown to them, is referred to their originals, so that through the images, we may adore Christ and venerate the Saints, whose similitude they bear.*" Now the honour and veneration of the images of Christ, &c. thus provided for by the highest authority of the Roman Catholic Church, as indispensably obligatory, we know to be held and taught in that Church, to be not such as is due to God. The second Council of Nice, A. D. 786, which is referred to by the Council of Trent, on this subject, did assert the direct worship of images; declaring at the same time, that it should not be Latria, which is

\* In stating the language of the decrees of the Council of Trent, Father Paul's history of that Council, it is proper to mention, is our authority. Mr. Butler, it is true, calls him a *disguised Calvinist*—and the author of the little work to which I have referred, calls his history a *libel, rather than a history*. Neither the one nor the other of these impugnors of the correctness of Father Paul in reporting the proceedings of the Council of Trent, can make good what he insinuates. They must both be aware that there is abundant testimony extant, in corroboration, in general, of that in this historian's narrative, with which Roman Catholics are offended. Be this, however, as it may, it cannot be shown that Father Paul has not correctly reported the decrees passed by this Council. It is several years since the writer looked over them in Pallavicini's work; but he believes that in *this respect*, there is no material difference. As to the history of proceedings, if Father Paul was biassed on one side, who will say that Pallavicini was not biassed on the other? In confirmation of the confidence with which the first is now referred to, as good authority for the decrees of the Council, the writer has found his language to be precisely that of an attested copy of the original acts of that Council, quoted by Dr. Marsh, in his comparative view, as preserved in the public Library of the University of Cambridge.



due only to God, but a merely honorary adoration. Now whether it be Latria, or any thing else, does not the sense of the Roman Catholic Church seem plainly to be, that religious honour should be paid to images? Thomas Aquinas, who wrote several centuries after the second Nicene Council, asserted for the images of Christ, &c. placed in the Churches, the direct worship of Latria; alleging that the same acts and degrees of worship, which were due to the original, were also due to the image; on the ground, that to worship the image with any other act than that by which the original was worshipped, was to worship it on its own account, which is idolatry. On the other hand, "*Ita ut ipsæ terminent venerationem, ut in se considerantur et non solum ut vicem gerunt exemplaris,*" the language of Bellarmine,\* places this matter in a different, but still a very perplexing light. His object is to vindicate the Church from the reproach of worshipping images, with the worship given to God. He assigns them, therefore, an inferior worship, which might be all their own. The difficulty is not thus removed. His *dulia* might be an inferior worship; but if it was worship at all, it was idolatry. There was only this unsatisfactory way (to say the least of it) of keeping away from the worship of images, such a construction. The Latria could not be idolatry, because it was the worship due to God alone. The object of such worship given to images, (in the intention of the worshipper) was *God through the images*, "*per imagines*" (the very language of the Council of Trent) and it could not therefore be idolatry.

But to come at once to the vindication of Protestants in this particular. Whatever be its character and degree, it cannot but appear to all acquainted with the religion of Roman Catholics and its history, that they render a veneration very much like worship, if it be not actually intended by their Church that it should be so considered, to "the images or pictures of the Virgin Mary, and other Saints." They are required to give them in their Churches, "due honour and veneration:" and the religious honour due to them, is considered by some of their own writers, to be Latria, "*honor sive cultus soli Deo exhibendus,*" the worship or honour to be given to God alone; by others *dulia*, or the honour, or worship, or service, which is paid to man by reason of some dignity, holiness, virtue or goodness: or, as the words of Aquinas thus literally rendered, define it, "*honor, vel cultus, vel servitus quæ exhibetur homini, ratione alicujus dignitatis, sanctitatis, virtutis, vel bonitatis.*"

In this adoration then, this "due honour and veneration given to the images of the Virgin Mother of God, and the Saints," in their Churches, do Roman Catholics "violate the second of God's commandments?" The words of the commandment are, *Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing in heaven above, or in the earth beneath—thou shalt not bow down to them nor worship them;† For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God,*

\* Bellarm. De Imag. l. 2. c. 21.

† At the 4th verse of the 20th chapter of Exodus, the Douay Bible has the following note—it is worthy of attention. "All such images or likenesses are forbidden

and visit the sins of the fathers, &c. Now this second of the ten commandments, we know that the Church of Rome, has sometimes confounded with the first.\* The first being a prohibition of polytheism—the second was treated as a continuation of its subject, prohibiting the worshipping of *image* Gods; and as images were not worshipped as Gods by the Church, the sense of the commandment, considered as part of the first, being confined to the one object of preserving the unity of God unobtruded upon, there would be no violation of its precept, in the use of images, according to the view which had been taken of its expediency. I will not, however, suppose, that Roman Catholics, in complaining that they are accused of violating the second commandment, mean any other commandment than that which Protestants consider so. The question, then, simply is, does the practice of Roman Catholics violate this commandment? Let its terms be read again, and let the reader determine for himself what opinion to entertain. Let him, at the same time, advert to the import of the following passage: “*Ye shall make no idols nor graven image, neither rear ye up a standing image of stone in your land, (to bow down to it) for I am the Lord your God. (Leviticus xxvi. 1.)* Also this, “*Take ye good heed to yourselves (for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spoke to you in Horeb,) lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female.” (Deut. iv. 15. 16.)* That all Roman Catholics intentionally violate this commandment, in rendering the *due honour and veneration*, which

by this commandment as are made to be adored and served, according to that which immediately follows: *Thou shalt not adore them nor serve them*, that is, all such as are designed for idols or image Gods, or are worshipped with Divine honour. But otherwise, images, pictures, or representations even in the house of God, and in the very sanctuary, so far from being forbidden, are expressly authorized by the word of God. See Exodus xxv. 5, &c. chap. iii. 8. 7.; Numbers xxi. 8. 9.; Chronicles xxiii. 18. 19.; 2 Chronicles iii. 10.” The reader, it is hoped, will turn to these passages, and see if they authorize any thing like the Roman Catholic use of images in their Churches. *Venite adoremus*, is the express language of the Roman Missal: Come let us adore. *Thou shalt not adore nor serve them*, is the language of their translation of Scripture. Roman Catholics will say they are not served; will they say that they are not adored? The language of the passage, as quoted by themselves, is, *adore nor serve*; not *adore and serve*.

\* It is not denied that others had done so before, both in the Jewish, and early Christian Churches. Their authority, however, was not paramount; nor was their purpose sinister. Philo, the Jew, is said to have made the first two commandments one. The preface—I am the Lord thy God, &c. being taken for the first; the second with the first, were together made the second. Athanasius did the same, as also Jerom and Hesychius, Clemens Alexandrinus and St. Austin. On the other hand, the Chaldee Paraphrast and Josephus, whose authority is so much more important than that of Philo, make the two first commandments to be distinctly—1. Thou shalt have none other Gods but me. 2. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, &c. They are followed by Origen, Gregory Nazianzen, Chrysostom, and others. By this division, the sense of Divine precept is, first, against all obtrusion of other or humanly constituted Gods, upon the one Jehovah; and then, against even the worship of *him*, by images, designed for a similitude of Deity—or of any thing else whatever, which the ingenuity, or folly, or perverseness of men might invent for objects of religious adoration; either in subordination to God, or in lieu of him, or as representative of him. See Bishop Taylor's *Duct. Dub.* l. ii. c. 2.



their Church requires, to the images of the Virgin Mary, &c. should not be asserted. We should not hesitate to admit that there are among them many who are capable of the elevated abstraction of enlightened piety, which saves them from any necessity or danger of rendering in their hearts, any honour which is due to God, to the image of his creature. But we must be permitted to doubt whether the *multitude* of Roman Catholic worshippers are not thus subjected to a temptation of having their spiritual *conversation more on earth than in heaven*. While, however, this may be, we may confidently ask, is not the commandment violated by Roman Catholics, as a body, by the fact of their erecting images in their Churches, to which it is obligatory to render honour and veneration? And if, as a body, they conscientiously obey, in this particular, the authority of their Church, must they not, as a body, violate the second commandment "without scruple?" I see not how it can be otherwise.

But Protestants are further said to misrepresent the religious conduct of Roman Catholics, by alleging that "sensible that their practice is contrary to the second commandment, they have, in several of their Catechisms, left out the second commandment, and split the tenth into two." Now it may be offensive to Roman Catholics, that Protestants should say they make this omission, because they are sensible that it is called for in aid of the authority of their Church, in ordering such adorations as they are required to pay to images; and Protestants may possibly err, in assigning this motive for the omission; but as they can see no other, and hold the fact of the omission to be indisputable, they surely are not justly censurable, either for the assertion of the fact, or their manner, so reasonable, of accounting for it. At a distance from libraries, to which other readers of the *Messenger* may have access, I cannot cite the Catechisms of the Church of Rome, or, (once for all) the Church of which the See of Rome is the head and centre, in evidence of this omission. Bishop Stillingfleet,\* whom I cannot be reproved by any Protestant, at least, for considering good and true authority, says that the second commandment, (I mean that so considered by Protestants, and as it is printed in the Septuagint, the Vulgate, and the Douay Bible, as well as our English version, and in the French and others,) is omitted not only in the Manuals, and short Catechisms of the Romish Church, but in an office of the Blessed Virgin, printed at Salamanca in 1552, and published by authority of Pius the Vth, (who was made *Saint Pius*,) and also in the office for the use of the English Catholics, at Antwerp, in 1653. Archbishop Secker also says, that "the Church of Rome has judged it the wisest way, to leave the second commandment, which too plainly forbids the worship of images, out of their smaller books of devotion." The Archbishop must be presumed to have been familiar with the fact which he asserts. Of the smaller books of devotion, &c. in use among the Roman Catholics, I have only one by me. It was printed at Poitiers, (the date not given)

\* Defence of the charge of Idolatry.

by the printer of the King and the University, *cum approbatione*.—It is entitled, "*Cura Clericalis-hoc est sacramentorum Breve Memoriale*." I copy from it the following, as to the first, second, and tenth commandments. Q. Quid prohibet primum preceptum? *What doth the first Commandment forbid?* A. *Non habebis Deos alienos coram me. Thou shalt not have strange Gods before me.* Q. Quod vetat secundum preceptum? *What doth the second Commandment forbid?* A. *Non assumes nomen Dei tui in vanum. Thou shalt not take the name of thy God in vain.* Then the other commandments being passed over—the fourth for the third—the fifth for the fourth, &c. the question occurs, *Quid POSTREMA DUO precepta vetant? What do the two last commandments forbid?* To which the answer is, *Non concupisces, &c. Thou shalt not covet, &c.*

It is useless to say any thing more on this subject of complaint. The next is, that Protestants say, "*Roman Catholics exculpate themselves from the charge of idolatry, no otherwise than as the heathens did.*" The Council of Trent, it is true, will not allow the heathen to have even pretended to worship any thing above their idols. It may, on the contrary, be safely asserted, that there is abundant evidence that they did—and that the *per images* of the Trentine decree, puts the matter, as to the use of images, very much on the same footing, in the one case as in the other. The testimony of several of the fathers might be given to this effect. I have, however, taken up too much of this number of your work already, and must content myself with the persuasion, that a great many besides those who have read the *Iliad* or *Æneid*, or even the school-boy's *Pantheon*, are familiar with the fact, that the presence of Jupiter, Juno, Apollo, Diana, and others, at least of classic mythology, was not supposed to be confined to the images, by which it was intended to represent them, and before which sacrifices were offered. Their *simulacra* were not the Gods themselves. Even the multitude were aware of this. And as to the more enlightened, "*quis tam cæcus, (says Cicero,) in contemplandis rebus, unquam fuit, ut non videret species istas hominum collatas in Deos, aut consilio quodam sapientum, quo facilius animos imperitorum, ad Deorum cultum, a vitæ pravitate converterent: aut superstitione, ut essent simulacra quæ venerantes Deos ipsos se adire crederent.*" *De. Nat. Deo. lib. i. c. 27.* The following, if not literally, is substantially the sense of the passage: *Who could ever be so blind to things as they truly are, as not to see, that the similitude of men, was given to the Gods, either through the wise intention of thus the more easily turning the ignorant from their wickedness, to the worship of the Gods, or that in their superstition they might believe, that they drew nigh to the very Gods themselves, as they did to the images they were adoring.*

As the distance at which I am from you, renders the regular transmission of what I write not practicable, I will forward to you all I have to say, in further vindication of Protestants against the accusation of Roman Catholics—and you may put it in abstract, all at once into your pages, or any part of it; or none at all, as may seem to you expedient.

A PROTESTANT CATHOLIC.



FOR THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

## ON THE PLANTING OF CHRISTIANITY IN GREAT-BRITAIN.

*Messrs. Editors,*—I find from an old Church history, written by Ephraim Pagitt, Parson of the Church of St. Edmond's, London, and published at least two hundred years ago; that Christianity was first established in Britain as early as the year of our Lord 35, by Joseph of Arimathea, his son Joseph, and ten others.

John Capgrave, in his life of Joseph of Arimathea, asserts "that he, and his son Joseph, with ten others, travelled through Britain, and preached the Gospel there."

Cardinal Baronius, about 1596, states out of a very ancient record in the Vatican library, that Joseph of Arimathea preached in England. His words are these: "Lazarus, Mary Magdalen, Martha, and Marcella a servant, whom the Jews hated more than others, were banished Jerusalem, and with Maximus, a disciple, put to sea in great danger, in a ship without oars, whom they report, by the providence of God, to have arrived at Marseilles: And they also report that Joseph of Arimathea, a noble Decurion, to be a partner with them in the said danger, whom they affirm to have sailed out of France into Britain, and there ended his days."

Some give to Britain the honour of having had the holy Apostles St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. Simon zelotes to preach in it; but none of these appear to have been there before Joseph, whom historians of good credit certify to have been the first that preached the religion of Christ in that country. Georgius Major positively affirms, that "the light of the Gospel was first kindled in Britain by Joseph of Arimathea." *Apol. cap. 15.*

And Saunders, to the same purpose, has these words: "It is affirmed, that Joseph of Arimathea first converted the Britains, and erected the first Church in that nation."

And Covarruvius, a Bishop of eminence and learning, is more explicit. He says, "that Joseph of Arimathea came into Britain; and when he and his companions had preached the Holy Gospel, &c. he there laid the first foundations of religion." D. Pitseus also asserts, "that he is certainly persuaded Joseph was the first Apostle of the British isle."

Histories report all these circumstances, namely, "of Joseph's building of a Church at Glastonbury, of his burial there, of an ancient table that hung in that Church;" yea, in some of the ancient charters of the British Kings of Glastonbury, it is affirmed, that "the said Church was built by the disciples of our Lord."

But more especially as for the time of Joseph's going into Britain, when the people there first received the faith of Christ, Gildas, an ancient historian of that nation, who lived in the first century, testifies, "*We know,*" he does not say it is reported, but "*we know* that in the time of Tiberius the Emperor, this Island received the faith." *See his Epist. vol. 9.*

Cardinal Baronius, whom I mentioned above, quotes the year of Joseph's going into Britain, out of that ancient record in the

Pope's library, namely, "in the 19th year of the reign of Tiberius the Emperor, and in the 35th year of our Lord." *See his Annals, Ann. 35.*

In this 35th year of Christ, historians report that the great persecution against the Church at Jerusalem, which is mentioned in the 8th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, took place, wherein the disciples were dispersed, and scattered abroad. At this time also St. Stephen was stoned; and about this time the Cardinal relates in his *Annals* out of Lucian, that "the Jews finding Nicodemus to be one of Christ's disciples, deprived him of his dignity, excommunicated him, and banished him from Jerusalem." *Sanct. Stephani. Annal.*

There are many authors who inform us, that, "the malice of the Jews was so vehemently incensed against Joseph of Arimathea, for burying of Christ, that they soon after confined him a close prisoner, in an obscure cell, which was watched by the high priests themselves, and from which he was miraculously delivered."

But whereas some would have Rome to be the mother Church of Britain, Cardinal Baronius writes, that "in the 39th year of Christ, and in the first year of Caius the Emperor, the Church of Antioch was instituted by St. Peter, where he was seated seven years, as many other authors also write, before he went to Rome." By which computation of time, we may gather, that the Christian faith was preached in Britain some years before there was a Church founded in Rome by St. Peter: But to help the matter, and establish their priority over Britain, some of the writers of the Church of Rome would have Joseph's going into that country, twenty-eight years after the time mentioned by Baronius, namely, in the 63d year of Christ, which if it should be true, yet the keeping of Easter, Baptism without chrism, having Priests married, with divers other customs used by the Britains, but not by the Romanists, when Austin in 568 went into England, and before; which shows that the Britains followed the customs of the Eastern Church, and that they differed from the Roman Church; which manifestly proves, that the Britains received their first Christianity from the Eastern Church, and not from Rome, whose customs they did not, nor would not observe.

"By this it appears, that the Church of Rome was not their mother Church, but a sister only, and that a younger one too; however her flatterers would make her Mother of all Churches; yea, of Jerusalem itself, which is the mother of us all."

And these are the holy men, who preached the Christian faith first in Britain, preverved and sent to them by Almighty God; according to that of the prophet Isaiah, cap. lxvi. 19. "And I will send those that escaped of them unto the nations, &c. and to the isles afar off, that have not heard of my fame, neither have seen my glory, and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles."

To conclude: Hector Boetius tells us, that the Druids, the old ancient British doctors taught, one only true God, and the immortality of the soul; and allow not the worship of God in images: Postel reports also that they prophecied of a Virgin's conception. *See Postel, cited by Speed, lib. 6. p. 204.* F.



FOR THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

## ALTERATIONS IN THE CONFIRMATION OFFICE.

*Messrs. Editors,*—There has recently been circulated in a pamphlet, an article, which appeared in the "*Philadelphia Recorder*," of 12th April last, entitled "Remarks on the proposed alterations in the Liturgy, and Confirmation Service," &c. containing several erroneous statements, which, perhaps, ought not to pass unnoticed.

It is due to candour to state, that in the conclusion of this writer, that it is inexpedient, and especially *at this time*, to change our liturgy, we heartily concur, but we are astonished at his assertion, "that an attempt is making to impose new doctrines on our Church," and we shall particularly examine the testimony he has adduced. He refers, in the first place, to the preface in the Confirmation Office, and tells us that the Apostolic origin of this ordinance, its identity with "the laying on of hands" mentioned by St. Paul, (Heb. vi. 2.) and its being a means of grace, or to use his own words, that "it conveys Divine grace," are not asserted in this preface, meaning to intimate that these opinions are not held by our Church. But surely the silence of the *preface* as to these points, is no evidence that they are not elsewhere set forth. It is not to the purpose to say that the Church does not hold this or that sentiment, because she has not put it down in that very place where the inquirer has searched for it, or thinks it ought to be. Bishop Hobart has remarked—"The present *preface* seems to be imperfect in not stating the authority on which the ordinance rests," and the writer before us leaps to the conclusion—"The Church has wisely refrained from stating the authority on which the ordinance rests," as if her silence in the *preface*, was proof of her entire silence on the subject. But let us see if his positive argument be any better than his negative one.

The proposed additional preface contains these three positions, "that the Apostles laid their hands on those who were baptized"—"that this ordinance has been retained in the Church under the name of Confirmation"—and that it is "styled by St. Paul, the laying on of hands, and ranked by him among the principles of the doctrine of Christ." Our author maintains that these assertions are now for the first time, introduced into our Prayer Book, in other words, he calls them, "new doctrines."

In the prayer next to the last, in the Confirmation Office, are these words: "upon whom, after the example of the holy Apostles, we have now laid our hands." Now we leave it to any person to say, whether they do not substantially contain the two first propositions in the new preface. In the 25th article it is said, Confirmation has grown "of the corrupt following of the Apostles;" plainly implying, that it is of Apostolic origin, though by the Romanists (who, in the article, are particularly alluded to,) it has been changed from its original character. As to the third proposition in the new pre-

face, which is objected to, it will be recollected that the ordinance is called in the Prayer Book, "Confirmation," or "the laying on of hands;" the latter expression being manifestly taken from Hebrews vi. 2.

If, however, any one of our members conscientiously think, that the framers of the Office of Confirmation did not mean to identify it with the "laying on of hands," ranked by St. Paul among the principles of the doctrines of Christ, I trust the General Convention will accommodate their scruples, by striking out the sentence in which this position is affirmed. The preface will be complete with this omission, reading thus: "It appears from Holy Scripture, that the Apostles laid their hands on those who were baptized, and this ordinance has been retained in the Church under the name of Confirmation, and is very convenient," &c.

As we are told that "many of the best commentators" (by the way only one is mentioned, viz. Scott,) do not admit the Apostolic origin of Confirmation, it may be well to remark, that those of the highest authority in our Church *do*, and we may add in other Churches also. Henry, the Presbyterian commentator, says the "passing from incomplete to complete Church-membership, was performed by the laying on of hands." Calvin, commenting on the passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews, in which is reckoned "the laying on of hands," considers it as evidence, that Confirmation was practiced by the Apostles; observing—"Young persons, when their infancy was past, and they had been instructed in their faith, offered themselves for catechism, which they had after baptism; but another rite was applied, viz. the imposition of hands." And in the fourth book of his "Institutions" he observes, "It was an ancient custom, that the children of Christian parents, when they were grown up, should be presented to the Bishop, to do that office which was required of persons who were baptized at adult age. Forasmuch as that being baptized in infancy, they could not then make any confession of their faith before the Church, they were again brought by their parents before the Bishop, and examined by him in the Catechism, which they had then in a certain form of words. And that this act, which ought to be grave and sacred, might have the greater reverence, the ceremony of the imposition of hands was used in the exercise of it. And so the youth, after their faith was approved, were dismissed with a solemn benediction." "Such an imposition of hands as this, which is used purely as a blessing, I very much approve of, and wish it were now restored to its pure and primitive uses."

And his successor, the celebrated *Beza*, bears testimony, in his comment on the same passage, to the Apostolic institution of this rite, speaking of an "explication of Christian doctrine, which was delivered to the catechumens in baptism, and *imposition of hands*."\*

\* In a "Report of a Committee of the General Assembly" of the *Presbyterian Church*, with respect to a plan for disciplining baptized children, there is the following candid acknowledgment on the subject of Confirmation:



St. Paul, in Hebrews vi. 2. could not have referred to ordination, (as our writer intimates might have been the case,) for with what propriety could a rite, intended only for Ministers, be called "a principle of the doctrine of Christ." Moreover, of the six principles mentioned in that place, five of them are indisputably of a *general* nature, and it is not to be supposed that the sixth could have been otherwise.

Our author thinks it not clear that the laying on of hands on Philip's converts was rather the rite of Confirmation, than "for the purpose of conferring miraculous powers." It is sufficient to reply, that the wisdom of our Church has come to a different decision, for she teaches her Bishops to say that *they* lay their hands, "after the example of the Holy Apostles." He also asserts, very confidently, that "miraculous powers followed this act" of Peter and John, and again that there is not an instance in which this act was used by the Apostles "to confer the sanctifying influence of the Holy Ghost." Now we have been led to read over with attention, Acts viii. 17. &c. and we do not see that all the converts, or that any of them worked miracles, in consequence of hands being laid on them. Neither do we see it denied that they received the sanctifying influence of the Holy Ghost. We are simply told, "they received the Holy Ghost," and to assert that they did *not* receive his sanctification, or illumination, or consolation, is to be wise above what is written. But to return to the charge of an attempt to introduce new doctrines. Our author's third specification is deduced from the new prayer—from the words: "dost graciously confirm unto them, ratifying the promises then made, all their holy privileges." We are here plainly taught, that in the rite of Confirmation, the Almighty confirms or ratifies to the worthy recipient, the privileges of baptism, and that the recipient renews, or ratifies, or confirms the promises of his baptism. Now we are at a loss to discover any thing new here. The very word "Confirmation," and the whole tenor of the office, imply the propositions which are objected to.—Does not the candidate say in effect: I do renew the solemn promise and vow of baptism, ratifying and confirming the same? Does not the Bishop say, "We have now laid our hands *to certify them* by this sign of thy favour and gracious goodness towards them." What

"It appears that a rite called Confirmation, was administered by the imposition of the hand of the *Minister*, or Bishop, or Elder, together with prayer, on baptized children, at a certain age. Both Calvin (in his *Institutions*, b. iv. c. 19. s. 4.) and Owen, (in his *Commentary on the Hebrews*, c. vi. v. 3. p. 33. vol. 3.) acknowledge that this practice existed at a very early period in the Church. The latter thus states its design: 'When they (that is, the children of believers, baptized in their infancy) were established in the knowledge of these necessary truths, (of which he makes mention before,) and had resolved on personal obedience unto the Gospel, they were offered unto the fellowship of the faithful: and here, on giving the same account of their faith and repentance, which others had done before they were baptized, they were admitted into the communion of the Church, the elders thereof laying their hands on them, in token of their acceptation, and praying for their confirmation in the faith.' This rite, which originally was confined to those who were baptized in their infancy, was afterwards administered to adults, immediately upon their baptism.—Quoted in *Bishop Hobart's Sermon on Confirmation*.

is the difference between "certify," and confirm, or ratify? To say that Confirmation is a ratification of the promises and privileges of baptism, our author thinks objectionable. If so, the new prayer is not answerable, as we think we have clearly shown by the quotations from the Office, as it now stands.

It is not our province to defend this new prayer, for, as we have stated, we are opposed to change; but while we deny that it contains any new doctrine, we may be permitted to express a wish, that our author had pointed out the "great and mysterious property," which he says this prayer attributes to Confirmation. *The prayer* does not say that "Confirmation is the same rite by which the Apostles conferred the Holy Ghost." That doctrine is, indeed, plainly to be inferred from the Office of Confirmation, and if our author does not admit it, he differs not from the prayer, (for on this point it says nothing) but from his Church. It is not that the fathers of our Church doubted whether Confirmation was "a means of grace" that they refused to call it a sacrament, but because it was not "ordained by Christ himself." It wants this property of a sacrament, according to the definition in our Catechism, and to the same effect the 25th article says it has not a "like nature of sacraments with baptism and the Lord's Supper," for that it has "not any visible sign or ceremony *ordained of God.*"

Before we dismiss the pamphlet before us, we are constrained to express our surprize, that one so averse to change should speak of the alterations in this manner—"It is proposed merely to extend the discretion," &c. If the Ministers were allowed to omit the Lessons altogether, or the Litany, it would still be "merely to extend the discretion." Again he says, "nor can they alarm the most sensitive conscience." If they alarm the friend of the Church, as threatening her discipline, (although not immediately affecting doctrine) as adapted to impair her beautiful worship, as opening the door to innovations, which will spare neither faith nor order, it surely is not to the purpose to say, that it cannot alarm the *conscience*. Neither is it to the purpose to say, that the ante-communion service, because omitted in the afternoon, cannot be deemed *essential* to the devout performance of worship. It may be very *conducive* to that purpose, and for that reason ought to be retained. But the truth is, our Liturgy is a system of instruction, as well as worship, and the ante-communion, in particular, is so material a part of the instruction, that the omission of it would deprive our people not only of the ten commandments, but of innumerable lessons of truth, and duty, and example, which have been provided for them, and are communicated in the very words of Scripture, and in an order adapted to render them peculiarly impressive—and what is to be the substitute? Long sermons, dependant, of course, as to the choice of subject, and the manner of treating it, on the talents and inclinations of a single individual. Experience shows that where the selection of portions of Scripture to be read, is left to the uncontrolled choice of the Minister, the people seldom can be said to have the benefit of "the whole counsel



of God." Instead of its being difficult to assign satisfactory reasons for the anxiety of our General Convention to enforce the observance of the ante-communion, we think the reasons are obvious, on the very surface of the subject. Who can reflectingly question the expediency of reading aloud, by God's Minister, the ten commandments, for the instruction of the ignorant, and the admonition of all; and of presenting to the view of the congregation, the doctrines, precepts, and holy examples of Scripture, according to the admirable system of our fasts and festivals, as chiefly developed in the collects, epistles, and gospels. P. M.

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EXTRACTS FROM

*The "Review of Scott's History of the Church of Christ,"*

In the "*London Christian Observer*."

It is difficult to conceive, in a Protestant and enlightened period like the present, and with the backwardness of men to recal scenes of past times, the almost incredible ignorance, imposition, idolatry, and vice, which covered almost the whole of Christendom at the moment when Luther first drew forth primitive Christianity, from its long concealment, to the view of an awakened and astonished world. The Pope was ANTI-CHRIST himself, the opponent of the person and glory of Christ; not of course in a way of open infidelity, but by the corruption of the Christian faith; by a blasphemous usurpation of the authority of Christ; by a virtual dethroning of the Divine Saviour, in the merit of his blood and the efficacy of his spirit; and by intruding in his stead the adoration of the Virgin Mary, and the intercession of the Saints. Christ was considered as an angry Judge, and Mary as the fountain of grace. The sinner fled from Christ as a minister of vengeance, and transferred his confidence to the Virgin and the Saints. The best gift of God to man, the religion of Jesus Christ, was converted into the very reverse of all the ends for which it was designed. The princes of the Roman empire, infatuated by the "cup of abominations," to use the emphatic language of prophecy, and "given up to a strong delusion to believe the lie" of the Babylonish sorceress, "agreed with one consent to give their power to the beast." Over the kings of the earth the mother of harlots reigned, partly by force, and partly by artifice and craft. The light of truth was almost extinguished. The grossest ignorance as to the first principles of Christianity prevailed. Secret scepticism and even Atheism spread amongst the ecclesiastics. The few sermons delivered were declamations on vows, pilgrimages, and the merits of Saints. The morals of the people from the highest to the lowest, not excepting the clergy, were sunk in the most flagrant vices; harlots, for example, were publicly escorted by the equipage of cardinals in the streets of Rome, and were allowed to follow pre-

lates and legates, when deputed to attend ecclesiastical councils, whilst the office of the Confessional was employed to reconcile and patronize vice by purchases and commutations and superstitious impositions. In the mean time, the Bible had been first closed, then discountenanced, then superceded by the authoritative comments of the fathers, and, lastly, prohibited to the people. In the controversies of the day, not the Scriptures, but the schoolmen were the sources of truth, and the arbiters of doctrine. It is, in short, impossible to conceive of a state of things more exactly fulfilling the predicted apostacy of the latter day—a state so fatally destructive and ruinous to souls, that the outward tyranny and persecution, and the resistance to the progress of knowledge and happiness, by which it was produced, are only to be considered as appendages and instruments of the spiritual defection.

In such a state of corruption, we wonder not that the Church of Rome roused herself to indignation at the proceedings of Luther. Nor do we wonder that she afterwards confirmed all the charges advanced against her, by the very manner in which she conducted her defence; by her threats and favours, her bribery and contrivances, her worldly spirit and profligate political schemes—by her open disregard of all care for truth, and her trifling with the souls of men; by her assertions at one time that the differences between the doctrine of the reformers and herself were merely verbal; and her admissions and treaties at another, made with the purpose of violating them, as soon as circumstances would allow. In short, imagine only in what way a Church, corrupted as the Apocalyptical visions reveal, would be likely to act when a reformation was begun; and in that precise manner will it be found that Papal Rome did actually proceed against Luther, and his noble associates. It was the kingdom of darkness disturbed by the kingdom of light, and resisting the disturbance.

And yet the Papacy was, in thirty short years, shaken to its very base by a feeble monk. Half Europe espoused the tenets; and of the other half, the larger part testified no doubtful indications of inquiry and desire of change. The chief leaders of the Papacy themselves were compelled by the force of truth to admit, from time to time, the existence of the corruptions of the Church, and the need of reform. The Archbishop of Saltsburg, for example, after the reading of the Confession of Augsburg, told every one,—

“That the Reformation of the mass was becoming, the liberty of meats proper, and the demand to be disburdened of so many commandments of men, just; but that a poor monk should reform all, was not to be endured.” pp. 24, 25.

In the year 1537, a commission was at length actually issued by Paul III. to several cardinals, to inquire into the corruptions and abuses of the Roman court—from which, though nothing whatever was ultimately done, we deduce clearly enough the actual state of the dominant hierarchy. Nor did the mighty effects on the Papacy produced by the Reformation itself, fall short of what these admissions would lead one to anticipate. On the direct results, however,



in the establishment of so many pure Churches after the model of the Apostolic doctrine, in the distribution of the Bible, and books of evangelical instruction, and the conversion of souls, we need not say a word, after the remarks scattered throughout this article: we would rather advert to those effects on the popedom, which, though incidental, were of the greatest importance, and continue in operation unto the present day. As early as the year 1530, Luther observes, that "the Catholic doctors borrowed from him, and learned to preach in quite a different manner than they had heretofore done." Three years afterwards Erasmus, the fickle timid Erasmus, appears as a witness of the tacit effects of Lutheranism. After extracts from his work on Concord, our author justly and acutely observes:—

"Almost all this, no doubt, is most truly excellent; but, then, was it contrary to the doctrine of Luther? was it what his opponents had taught? was it even, as it would perhaps purport to be, intermediate between the two? Rather its being propounded in this manner by Erasmus is a proof of the extent to which Luther had prevailed in his attacks upon long established error. Erasmus himself, it is probable, would never have written or thought as he here does, had it not been for Luther. Seckendorf justly observes, that most of the positions which he thus lays down, 'might be expressed, and nearly in the same words, from Luther himself; though Erasmus was accustomed so to temper his language, that it might not directly offend against the formularies of a party which he dared not desert. His doctrine of free-will, for example, here proposed, avoiding all thorny disputations, as he calls them, is substantially that which Luther maintained. Only adhere to what is thus taught concerning human impotency and imperfection, and what becomes of the sort of merit for which Eccius, Faber, and all that class of men contended? The sentences, to which Erasmus objects, were not Luther's, but were calumniously imputed to him.' So far the learned historical commentator on Lutheranism." pp. 160, 161.

Then, eight years further on (1541), the concessions of the papal advocates on the doctrine of justification were suprising, and actually laid the foundation for an agreement, if that had been sincerely sought.

The gradual improvement of the general tone of morals kept pace with the silent victories of truth; and the Romish doctors were compelled, by the movements of men's minds and the spirit of inquiry, to enter far more into the questions of Christianity, to attend more to essential truths, and to discharge the functions of the Christian ministry with somewhat more of piety and diligence. The light penetrated in every direction. In fact, we should never have heard of such men as Jansenius and his followers in France, or of Borromeo in Italy, or of the affecting and powerful writings produced by the Roman Catholic ecclesiastics on the great foundations of our common Christianity, or of the partial revivals of religion in different spots of the Popedom, or of the salvation of souls, if Luther

had not first dispelled the darkness by the wide-spread illumination of his flaming torch.

These incidental effects were no doubt partial and inadequate. The vast mass of the popish body remained in the same, or nearly the same, depth of superstition and idolatry; and the ostensible Church, the leading hierarchy, contrived by the decrees of the Council of Trent to rivet the old chains by which their vassels had been bound, and to forge many new ones. But the main and important consequences of throwing open truth, and asserting the principle of the religious liberty of mankind, appealing to the public only, proclaiming the abuses and corruptions of the existing superstitions, proposing the fair and simple form of genuine Christianity, maintaining the peculiar doctrines of the merits and grace of Christ, exposing to view the distortions of the popish rule of faith and morals, and recalling men to the few and mighty principles and precepts of the Gospel; all these effects did follow, not only directly but incidentally, tacitly, by insinuation, in a thousand secret channels. These principles are working still, and will increasingly work, in proportion to the purity of the Protestant Churches, the spirit of love and concord which unites them, and the holy lives and conduct which they exhibit. We care little for the boasted infallibility of the popish Church; we care little for its vaunted unchangeableness of character. The last thing to which any public bodies are brought, is a formal retraction. Truth is invincible. Education and the Bible must, and will, and do, sap, by the grace of God, the very foundation of papal ignorance and superstition, and this in the bosom of their own communities. The bulls issued of late against the Bible societies will recoil upon the framers of them. The members of the popish communion will and must, individually, drop off and join their Protestant brethren, as light is diffused. The one thing, we are sometimes inclined to think, which conspires, with many others, to hold together the Papists in these Protestant dominions, is not so much the love of truth and conscience, as that highly political party spirit which so unhappily mixes with their religion. Let that unnatural bond of union be loosened, and man left, in the present state of Europe, to the unimpeded effects of truth and knowledge, and the Pope will soon totter on his ill-sustained throne, and the nations and individuals still adhering to his absurd and antiquated errors, will be only those who, deluded by their love of unrighteousness, are reserved for destruction at the coming of the Lord. The danger, accordingly, which threatens us, a Protestant people, is, we are disposed to think, not so much from the arguments or craft which Popery may employ, as from our own apathy and indifference to religion generally; from infidelity and deism insinuating themselves under the guise of a loose and undefined Christianity; from the forgetfulness of the main characters and controlling discoveries of the Gospel; from provoking the God of mercy and truth by ungrateful returns to him for all his goodness, and by a contemptuous disregard of his Word and Spirit. Our danger arises from the indecent levity with which



the differences between the Protestant and the Popish creeds are sometimes treated by our public men, and this even in our senate. With an abstinence from political heats, we would combine the most wakeful jealousy of the portentous folly, superstition, and tyranny of the anti-Christian Church. We would have men doubly alive to the unutterable evil of idolatry; the guilt of human inventions for pardon; the danger of uninspired commandments; the certain demoralization which is created by indulgences, satisfactions, and the merits of saints; and the total denial of all effective Christianity, which flows from a heap of unmeaning ceremonies, adapted to fascinate the senses,—from a blind acquiescence in human authority,—from ignorance the most profound, joined with dogmatism the most presumptuous,—from the exclusion of the Bible and the extinction of free inquiry. What the torpor and the ignorance of Protestant statesmen, combined with the incredible zeal of Papists, may effect, we know not. But the main preventive we conceive to be not political heats and animosities, but an aroused conviction of the spiritual enormities of the one system, and of the holy life-giving doctrine of the other; Popery presenting, on all sides, a direct contrast to the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel—Protestantism founded on the word of God, and that only.

All the declarations made at different times in or out of parliament by public men, that we are not greatly accountable for our opinions—that we have no better reason to assign for our adherence to the Protestant Church than that we were born in a Protestant country—that questions about transubstantiation are of no more importance than the idle disputes agitated by the schoolmen—are of the worst tendency, and directly go to dig up the foundations of Christianity itself.

In this view, the very erroneous impression which a celebrated statesman lately gave of the Protestant faith deserves an instant's notice, more especially as Mr. Scott has inadvertently mis-stated a little the exact case. The passage is thus given in the parliamentary debates for April, 1825, in the report of the speech of Mr. Canning, on the 21st of that month:—

“The next objection which has been insisted upon, and it is one which I certainly did not expect to have heard, is, that the Roman Catholics ascribe an overweening merit and efficacy to human actions. Be it so. But we who are considering these several tenets only as they affect the state, may perhaps be permitted to ask, Are those who lay so much stress on works, likely to be worse or better subjects than those who believe that good works are of no avail, but that faith alone is all in all? I presume not to decide which is the more orthodox opinion; but for a good subject of a state whose safety I am to provide for, I, for my part, would unquestionably prefer the man who insists on the necessity of good works as part of his religious creed, to him who considers himself controlled in all his actions by a pre-ordained and inexorable necessity; and who, provided he believes implicitly, thinks himself irresponsible for his actions.” Mr. Scott somewhat misapprehends the passage when he observes—

“ ‘The doctrine of the merit of works,’ we have lately heard it pronounced, and that by Protestants high in office, ‘is less to be dreaded than that of justification by faith only!’ ” p. 42.

The error of the statesman was much more extensive. It proceeds on the notorious mistake that the Protestant doctrine denies or weakens the necessity of good works: it takes for granted, contrary to all experience, that Popery insists more than Protestantism on the importance of human actions: it insinuates, or rather asserts, in face of the real fact, that Protestants do not teach the necessity of good works, as a part of their religious creed, but consider themselves to be governed by an inexorable fate, and therefore to be irresponsible for their actions. If such deplorable mis-statements should be often made in a Protestant legislature, and should pass current amongst the nobles and rulers of our country, the worst effects may be expected to follow. But we have been insensibly drawn into too great length on this topic. Our design was to point the attention of our readers to the real character of the Roman Catholic Church, as delineated in the volumes before us, and the suprising effect which the Reformation has produced, and is producing, directly and incidentally, upon it.

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### POETRY.

[FROM THE PHILADELPHIA RECORDER.]

Chained down to earth and all below,  
My soul would fly to thee:  
Jesus, within my bosom glow,  
Inspire and comfort me.

Fain would I leave this stormy shore  
For thine abode of peace:  
Where Satan tempts the heart no more,  
But all is love and bliss.

Fain would my weary spirit rise,  
And leave earth far behind:  
And stript of earth's alluring guise,  
Unfading pleasures find.

Oh! for the prophet's burning wheel  
To bear me to my God:  
Oh! for his lustre to reveal  
The bright and heavenly road.

Oh! for a spark of heavenly flame  
To warm this lifeless breast:  
And bid it join the sweet acclaim,  
Of saints and angels blest.

Releas'd from earth's pursuits below,  
So would I fly to thee!  
Jesus! within my bosom glow,  
Inspire and comfort me.



**RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.**

*Convention of the Diocese of South-Carolina.*—The annual meeting was opened on the 18th February, by a sermon from the Rev. Mr. Walker, (text, Romans iii. 28—31.) which we indulge the hope of obtaining for publication in the "*Gospel Messenger*."

Twenty-three Clergymen and twenty-six Laymen attended the Convention. The most important measure was the raising of a Committee, on motion of the Rev. Mr. Gervais, to institute a Society charged with the single object of devising means for the increase of the permanent fund for the support of a Bishop. The Committee on the Theological Seminary, reported that nearly two-thirds of the quota of this Diocese, for the building fund of the General Theological Seminary, had been paid, notwithstanding the discouraging circumstance that other Dioceses (New-York excepted,) had done so little in this important matter, recommended to their special attention, by the last General Convention. After some discussion, the Convention adopted a resolution to the effect, that it was inexpedient at this time, to make any changes in the Book of Common Prayer. The address of the Bishop contained an interesting and satisfactory exposé of the state of the diocese, and much salutary counsel, addressed both to the Clergy and Laity. The Convention adjourned on the 20th February.

*Protestant Episcopal Society for the Advancement of Christianity in South-Carolina.*—The Anniversary, under the new provision of the Constitution, was held on Tuesday of the week in which the Convention met; the Annual Report was read, (from which it appeared, that during the year five Missionaries had been employed by the Society; and that Tracts and Prayer Books, as usual, had been distributed: also that one year's profits of the "*Gospel Messenger*," of \$68 68, was added to the Society's funds,) and the officers of the last year re-elected. The change of the day of the Anniversary, was with the view of securing a large attendance of members, particularly of those who attended the Convention, but this first experiment was not encouraging. Divine service was held in St. Michael's Church, but the sermon was not delivered in consequence of the inclemency of the weather, which prevented the preacher from arriving in season.

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*Protestant Episcopal Missionary Society composed of Young Men and others.*—On the Anniversary, February 20, a meeting was held, officers elected, and the preacher appointed for the evening of the Sunday following the anniversary of the next year. The Treasurer's accounts were duly audited. The Annual Report of the doings of the Board of Managers was not ready, a circumstance which no doubt they will satisfactorily explain when it is published, it being understood that it will soon be prepared. On Sunday Evening the 22d February, an address was delivered at St. Michael's Church, by

the Rev. Mr. Edward Philips, and a collection made at the doors to the amount of \$53.

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*St. Stephen's Chapel, Charleston.*—One who wishes well to the object of this Chapel, has enclosed to the Bishop a donation of \$50, to be applied as he thinks proper, to the interests of the same.

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*Protestant Episcopal Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society.*—The Rev. Mr. Robertson sailed from Boston on the 1st January, 1829, for Malta, whence he will pass to Greece, as the agent of this Society. He was furnished with the following letter:

"The undersigned taking under his consideration, that in acting under your commission, you may occasionally have an intercourse with some bishop of the Greek Church, desires you to present to any such Right Reverend person, the profound respect, and the fraternal affection of a brother bishop in the forty-fourth year of his episcopacy, and the president of the society in whose service you are about to depart for Greece.

The undersigned recognizes the Greek Church as of apostolic origin, and a sister of the Church in which he unworthily holds a conspicuous station. He has for a long time felt a deep interest in the oppression endured by certain portions of the said Church, under the Turkish government, and in their persevering attachment to the faith handed down to them by our blessed Saviour and his apostles. He has rejoiced in their late deliverance from that power, and has prayed that it may be permanently established, and that it may be productive of their increase in every grace and in all good works.

If any such Right Reverend person should administer to you any religious aid, or any personal kindness in the discharge of your commission, let him be assured that it will be faithfully recorded and gratefully remembered, by the Church under whose authority you are about to labour.

Given in the city of Philadelphia, this twenty-second day of November, in the year of our Lord, 1828. WILLIAM WHITE,

Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and senior Bishop of the said Church in the United States.

Several other bishops subsequently joined in the above letter, by affixing their signatures. Applications would have been made to all of them, for that purpose had time allowed."

The chiefs of the Oneida tribe, have addressed a letter to the Executive Committee, from which we extract the following:

"We are induced to write you in consequence of hearing by our brother Williams, that you are disposed to look after the Oneidas who have emigrated into this part of the country, and who, by the providence of the Good Spirit, are in communion with the Protestant Episcopal Church. Our hearts were filled with joy, when we heard that you and others had taken a great interest in our temporal and spiritual affairs.



Fathers and Brothers, We are not able to say all we feel or wish to say on this paper. We trust it is enough for as to say, that we rejoice to hear that you will hereafter support the Gospel among us.

We hope you will say to all good people of our Church, that the Oneidas at Green Bay are firmly attached to the Christian faith, and will, by the help of the Great Spirit, adhere strictly to the prayers and ceremonies of the holy Church.

Fathers and Brothers, Pray for us, that we may lead a holy life, and that the Great Spirit, when we die, may, in his great mercy, receive us to himself in heaven."

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*Protestant Episcopal Press.*—We publish with great pleasure the following letter to the Editors.

"In your highly favourable and gratifying notice of the 'New-York Protestant Episcopal Press,' published in the January number of your valuable work, you speak of that institution as established by the 'General Protestant Episcopal Sunday School Union.'—You were probably led to form that opinion by the second report of the 'Union.' So far as the assertion, that the 'Press' originated in the 'General Sunday School Union,' that representation is correct. The plan, now carrying into effect, was suggested by the wants of the 'Union,' and proposed by members of the Executive Committee of that body. Its execution will be in the highest degree subservient to the interests of the 'Union.' But it would be injustice to the active and zealous Churchmen who compose the Board of Trustees, (of whom only two are connected with the Sunday School Union,) not to inform you that several of them had entertained thoughts of the plan now set on foot, even before the establishment of our Sunday School Union; and that all of them, as soon as the project was suggested by the gentlemen above alluded to, volunteered their pecuniary aid and personal services in the promptest manner, with no other claim upon them than that produced by their attachment to the Church. The 'Press' is designed for the equal benefit of all our religious and benevolent institutions in this diocese, and of any others which may choose to avail themselves of the advantages that it will afford. It is a perfectly independent institution, supported by its own subscribers, managed by its own Trustees, and having its own peculiar ends in view—those ends being subservient to the advancement of its sister institutions. Its operations have not yet commenced; but the Board of Trustees are making all the necessary arrangements, on such a scale as their means will permit, and with the degree of caution necessary to ensure stability and efficiency. I have the honour to be, gentlemen, your obe't. serv't.

W. R. WHITTINGHAM, *Sec'y. N. Y. P. E. Press.*"

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*General Church Institutions*—In the "*Church Register*," printed at Philadelphia, and the "*Episcopal Watchman*," printed at Hartford, are articles enforcing very ably the obligation of the members of our Church to assist the institutions which come under the

above character. Some earnest monition of this kind is loudly called for, since it appears that the recommendation of the last General Convention, as to the building fund of the General Theological Seminary, has been totally disregarded by many of the dioceses; indeed we do not know more than one of them who can be said even to have bestowed on it a moments consideration; we except, of course, New-York, to which diocese the recommendation was not addressed, it having done its part in relation to this fund.

*New-Hampshire Episcopal Convention.*—Three Ministers and five of the Laity attended. Sermon by the Rev. Mr. Burroughs, from Psalm lxxx. 14. It appears that there is a Society of young ladies, denominated St. Andrew's Church Circle of Industry; by whose exertions a sum has been raised nearly sufficient to defray the expenses of trimming the pulpit, desk, and communion table.

The Committee on the Episcopate Support, reported—

That one tenth part of the rents arising from the lands already recovered in the old county of Cheshire are paid to the Bishop, affording him a yearly income of nearly \$100; and that in some Churches of the State, a liberal provision has been made, in conformity to the canons, for defraying the expenses of the Bishop, while making the visitations of the diocese. The Committee consider it incumbent on Episcopalians to support the Order of Bishops as an essential part of the Christian ministry.

The Committee appointed at the last annual Convention upon the subject of certain proposed alterations of the Liturgy, and a proposed alteration of the eighth article of the Constitution of the Church, submitted by the House of Bishops, and the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies of the last General Convention, reported against the expediency of adopting the proposed alterations of the Liturgy, and in favour of the proposed amendment of the Constitution. Which report was accepted.

#### BIBLE QUESTIONS.

*On what charge was our Lord tried and condemned by the Jews; and why did they bring him before Pontius Pilate?*

Consult Stanhope on the *Epistles and Gospels*, vol. iv. Pearson on the *Creed*, Article iv.; and the Commentators on *Matthew*, chap. xxvi. xxvii.; *Mark* xiv. xv.; *Luke* xxii. xxii.; *John* xviii. xix.

Answers to be returned in the first week of April.

#### NEW PUBLICATIONS.

*London Review.*—This new quarterly is to be edited by the Rev. Blanco White, and was expected to appear in January, of the present year.

*Memoirs of Henry Martyn.*—This work is about to be published at Geneva, in the French language.

*A Sermon in respect to the memory of Dr. A. Watkins*, by the Rev. H. Smith, Rector of St. Paul's, Augusta, delivered on the 14th December, and also published at the request of the Wardens and Vestry of said Church.

We know not when we have read a more interesting, a more useful, and more pathetic discourse. The author ably combats those views of Materialism, (which we are sorry to say, found an advocate in the first number of the "*Southern Review*,")



denies that an intimate knowledge of man's physical nature is favourable to scepticism, and strengthens his denial by a reference to some able physicians of our own country, who were eminent Christians. But the chief merit of the discourse consists in its sound views of Christian doctrine, and its alluring exhibition of a character enlightened, ennobled, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit of God. The contrast between a mere moral man, adorned with all those excellencies which morality, separated from religion, implies, and the truly religious man, is set forth by the hand of "a master in Israel." And we doubt not that many of his hearers were ready to exclaim, "Oh that I might live the life of the righteous, and that my last end might be like his." To the justice, the feeling character, and we may add, the originality of the following remarks, our readers will assent.

"Did I believe, brethren, in the existence, the necessary existence of a sceptic spirit, among most of that profession, of which our deceased friend was a member and an ornament, from my inmost soul, would I grieve and lament. Nay I should be at a loss to reconcile the dealings of God in the external world, with his express declarations in the volume of revelation. Through his judicial sentence on primeval transgression, we are born the heirs to disease and death. Upon the charities and the attention of this class of men, then, by whom disease is often mitigated and removed, and death itself, for a time averted, we are necessarily cast.

"They seem to us the Heaven appointed instruments of relief. No class of men carry with them more visibly the stamp of Divine approbation, the ordinary benediction of the Lord of Hosts. Now, we say, whence this influence, this necessary, permitted, and graciously overruled influence, if these men, as a body, are in league with the prince of darkness to undermine the faith of the Son of God? How could we reconcile this, with the moral government of him, who "doeth all things well." Are they necessarily forced upon investigations destructive to their own faith and hopes, or which must make them subversive of the faith and hopes of others? Or if, through the pride of intellect or the abuse of science, they have become dangerous to the happiness and the souls of men, would it not be reasonable to expect that their influence would be abridged? On the supposition under notice, what, oh what would not now be the state of the world? Lo! These are they, to whom we must of necessity apply, when disease lays upon us its enfeebling hand, or attacks those in whose life we are bound up. We must introduce them into the sanctuary of our homes: give them access to all whom these homes contain, from unsuspecting childhood and warm-hearted youth, up to waning and too credulous age. We must bring them near to our own sick beds; and give them opportunities of influence when mind is weak, and hold out to their touch our fluttering pulse, even when death has already reached the citadel of life, and when our departing spirits, are in need of all the consolations of Christian Faith. And are these they who invariably diffuse around them, the pestilential atmosphere of infidelity; who deny an hereafter, and throw scorn upon that blessed and only Gospel, which "hath brought life and immortality to light?" Then woe, woe, be to us and to our children! They that should heal our bodies, may destroy our immortal souls. We may not take their life restoring draughts, lest the poison of irreligion and eternal death, should be mixed with them! But away with the suggestion. Facts disprove, and our hearts reject it. I will not concede to Infidelity, the honour and the triumph, of the exclusive, or principal share in such a host, so useful to the world, so evidently blessed of God."

## EPISCOPAL ACTS.

### ORDINATIONS.

*By the Right Rev. Dr. Hobart, Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in New-York.*—On Sunday October 19, 1828, in Trinity Church, N. Y. the Rev. Hiram Adams, Rev. Edward, K. Fowler, Rev. Albert Hoyt, Rev. Charles J. Todd, Deacons, were admitted to the Holy Order of Priests.

On Sunday Nov. 23, 1828, in St. John's Chapel, N. Y. the Rev. Sutherland Douglas, Deacon, was admitted to the Holy Order of Priests.

*By the Right Rev. Dr. Brownell, Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Connecticut.*—On Sunday January 25, 1829, in Trinity Church, New-Haven, Mr. William Croswell, was admitted to the Holy Order of Deacons; and the Rev. Francis L. Hawkes, Deacon, was admitted to the Holy Order of Priests.

**OBITUARY NOTICES.**

COMMUNICATED.

Died in this city, on the 5th of January last, ELIZA G. GODFREY, eldest child of J. G. Godfrey of St. Bartholomew's Parish, aged eight years and four months. In afflictions arising from the bereavement of those we love, we are naturally impelled to think of the virtues of the objects, which although it may give momentary poignancy to our feelings, to know that such worth has been our loss; yet there is also in it something so consoling as to make "joy in grief felt." This sentiment has been called forth by reflecting on the death above stated. Severe, indeed, has been the blow to the idolizing parents, and sympathizing friends. That she was loved, and deserved to be so, is testified by her being an acknowledged favourite among her numerous connexions; and the unrestrained grief of some of her little companions loudly told the strong hold she had on their hearts. Intelligent, meek, tractable, affectionate, she seemed to be one of those of whom the Saviour has said, "of such is the kingdom of heaven."

"Liv'd! to wake each tender passion,  
And delightful hopes inspire;  
Died! to try our resignation,  
And direct our wishes higher.

Rest sweet babe, in gentle slumbers,  
'Till the Resurrection morn;  
Then arise to join the numbers,  
That its triumph shall adorn.

Though thy presence so endearing,  
We thy absence now deplore;  
At the Saviour's bright appearing  
We shall meet to part no more."

Died at Williamboroughs, N. C. on Thursday January 15, 1829, Mrs. SARAH RAVENSCROFT, wife of the Right Rev. Dr. Ravenscroft, Bishop of that Diocese.

An acquaintance of some years with this inestimable lady, during her residence in this city, enables us to bear testimony to her piety and virtue. Of mild and endearing manners, and of a friendly disposition, Mrs. Ravenscroft was esteemed by her neighbours, and beloved in no common degree by her friends and connexions. She had no children; but her loss will be irreparable to her kind and indulgent husband.—*Episcopal Watchman.*

Died at Brooklyn, N. Y. January 29, 1829, the Rev. CAVE JONES, Chaplain in the U. S. Navy, aged 59 years.

Died, on the 23d January, 1829, the Rev. ALBERT HOYT, Rector of St. Andrew's Church, Walden, Orange county, New-York.

**CALENDAR FOR MARCH.**

1. Quinquagesima Sunday, or Shrove Sunday.
2. Monthly Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Protestant Episcopal Society, for the advancement of Christianity in South-Carolina.
4. Ash-Wednesday, or beginning of Lent.
8. First Sunday in Lent.
11. Ember Day.
13. do. do.
14. do. do.
15. Second Sunday in Lent.
22. Third Sunday in Lent.
25. Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
29. Fourth, or Middle Lent Sunday.